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ABSTRACT

The Wake County Public School System (WCPSS), North Carolina, has conducted surveys of parents at intervals since 1991. Surveys are now conducted annually as required by legislation. Surveys have provided important information about parent perceptions of individual schools, the quality of education, the system overall, and specific programs and initiatives. The 2001 parent survey was distributed on a stratified random sample basis to parents at each educational level. Parents returned 7,925 surveys, a return rate of approximately 57% for all levels. This return rate was much higher than that of the survey of April 1999. Survey findings show that over the past 6 years, parent respondents are more positive regarding the high quality educational program at their children's schools. There has been a significant positive trend over the past 6 years with regard to parent perception that their children are receiving challenging work at all levels. About two-thirds of elementary school parent respondents spend 3 hours or more helping their child with homework each week. Parents at all levels continued to believe that school is a safe place to learn. On a less positive note, surveys responses indicate that the level of agreement with the statement that students are well behaved overall dropped several points from previous surveys. Questions related to home-school communication showed lower agreement at the high school level than at other levels. The survey is attached. (Contains 39 references.) (SLD)

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2000-2001

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PARENT SURVEY RESULTS
2000-2001

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Department of Evaluation and Research
December 2001

WAKE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM

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PARENT SURVEY RESULTS 2000-2001

Author: Wanda N. Wildman (919-850-1878)

BACKGROUND

Evaluation and Research (E&R) staff have conducted surveys of WCPSS school parents since spring of 1991. Surveys were conducted annually for 5 years, until 1995, after which time the surveys were conducted biannually (1997 and 1999). Surveys are now conducted annually due to state requirements, beginning with spring of 2001. Surveys have provided important information about parent perceptions of individual schools, the quality of education, the system overall, and specific programs and initiatives (e.g., Safe Schools/Healthy Students).

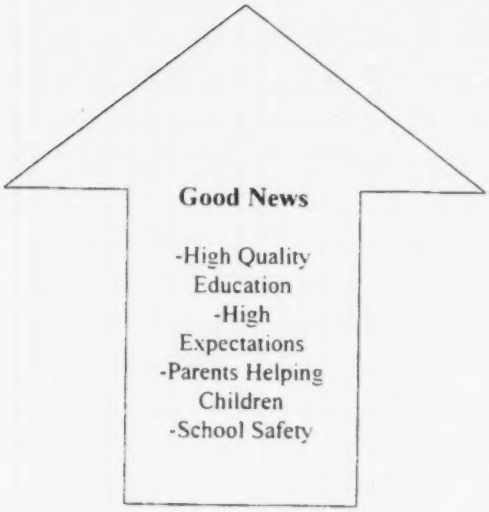
Beginning in the spring of 2001, the parent survey was distributed to parents on a stratified random sample basis, rather than to all parents. The 2001 survey was distributed to parents of four elementary school classes, six middle school classes, and eight high school classes, at each school. At each elementary school, one second-, third-, fourth-, and fifth-grade class was randomly selected. At each middle and high school, two homerooms per grade level were selected. If homerooms at the middle and high schools did not meet regularly or were not organized by grade level, either two English or two Social Studies classes per grade level were randomly selected.

The length and content of the survey have also changed. Previously, the parent survey was two pages and approximately 55 questions. For 2001, the parent survey was limited to one page with no more than 24 questions. The parent surveys used at the elementary, middle, and high school levels in 2001 are included as Attachment 1 at the end of this report.

The surveys were sent to the school principal for distribution to the classes selected by E&R. Teachers of the selected classes gave each student a survey/envelope to take home to their parent(s), and students were told to return the sealed envelopes to class. The survey was accompanied by an envelope that could be sealed for its confidential return to E&R. The majority of the surveys were returned via the parents' child to the classroom and collected by the teacher. A small number of surveys were sent from the parents directly to E&R.

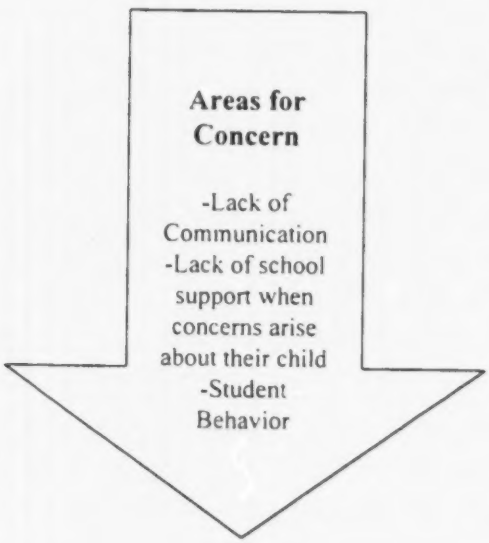
E&R distributed surveys to approximately 13,876 elementary, middle, and high school parents. 7,925 surveys were returned, resulting in a return rate of approximately 57% for all levels. This overall return rate is much higher than that of the parent survey conducted in April 1999, which had an overall return rate of 46%. The largest increase was with high school parent participation, up 16 points from 34% to 50%. Elementary school parent participation was up 11 points, from 50% to 61%, and middle school parent participation increased slightly, from 50% to 54%.

RESULTS SUMMARY



GOOD NEWS

- Over the past 6 years, parent respondents are more positive regarding the high quality educational program at their child's school.
- There has been a significant positive trend over the past six years with regard to parent perception that their children are receiving challenging work in all classes.
- About two thirds of elementary school parent respondents spend three hours or more helping their child with schoolwork or school preparation each week.
- Parents at all levels continue to believe that school is a safe place to learn.


Areas for Concern
-Lack of Communication
-Lack of school support when concerns arise about their child
-Student Behavior

AREAS FOR CONCERN

- The level of agreement with the statement that students are well behaved overall dropped several points from previous surveys at all three school levels.
- While a general pattern across all questions is that high school responses were less positive than other levels, the three questions related to home-to-school communication showed much lower agreement (15-20 points) than at the other levels.

2000-2001 RESPONSE PATTERNS

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

When asked to indicate whether they agreed or disagreed with the statement, "My child's school provides a high quality educational program", parents most frequently chose "Agree" or "Strongly Agree". The level of agreement was slightly higher than in previous surveys.

While 87% of the elementary parent survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their child's school provided a high quality educational program, a lower percentage of middle school and high school parent respondents (81% and 78% respectively) indicated agreement. At the high school level, nearly 10% of parent respondents disagreed with the statement.

While the changes from year to year are not large, it should be noted that the level of agreement among parents at the high school level increased 8 percentage points from 1995 to 2001 (from 70% to 78%).

Figure 1: Response to Survey Item:
My child's school provides a high quality educational program.

		Answer Options					Combined Options		
2000-2001 Results	N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree	DS/D	Uncertain	SA/A
Elementary	4474	0.98	3.26	8.76	51.30	35.70	4.24	8.76	87.00
Middle	1942	1.29	5.97	11.84	57.16	23.74	7.26	11.84	80.90
High	1526	1.64	7.54	12.45	58.13	20.25	9.18	12.45	78.38
Overall	7942	1.18	4.75	10.22	54.05	29.81	5.93	10.22	83.85
				1999			6.06	11.89	82.00

2000-2001 Results					1999	1997	1995
	N	DS/D	Uncertain	SA/A	SA/A	SA/A	SA/A
Elementary	4474	4.24	8.76	87.00	85.30	83.80	85.90
Middle	1942	7.26	11.84	80.90	78.70	76.40	77.80
High	1526	9.18	12.45	78.38	76.90	71.80	69.60

(Note: The numbers shown under answer options in all figures in this report are percentages of all responses received.)

Another general question related to quality of education was whether or not parents agreed that "My child is given challenging work in all classes." Once again, the level of agreement of elementary school parents (82%) was higher than for middle and high school parents (73% and 72% respectively). Nearly 10% of overall parent respondents felt their child was not given challenging work in all classes.

As shown in Figure 2, there has been a positive trend over the past six years regarding this issue. Since 1995, more high school parents felt their child was given challenging work in all classes (up to 72% from 62%). Similarly, elementary school parents showed a 9 point gain and middle school parents showed a 7 point gain.

Figure 2: Response to Survey Item:
My child is given challenging work in all classes.

		Answer Options					Combined Options		
2000-2001 Results	N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree	DS/D	Uncertain	SA/A
Elementary	4472	1.05	6.91	10.20	53.15	28.69	7.96	10.20	81.84
Middle	1951	2.05	10.40	14.45	53.92	19.17	12.45	14.45	73.09
High	1523	1.77	10.90	15.30	54.43	17.60	12.67	15.30	72.03
Overall	7946	1.43	8.53	12.22	53.58	24.23	9.97	12.22	77.81
				1999			10.39	12.72	76.88

2000-2001 Results					1999	1997	1995
	N	DS/D	Uncertain	SA/A	SA/A	SA/A	SA/A
Elementary	4472	7.96	10.20	81.84	80.30	78.40	73.00
Middle	1951	12.45	14.45	73.09	73.40	71.20	66.40
High	1523	12.67	15.30	72.03	71.70	68.60	61.90
Overall	7946	9.97	12.22	77.81			

Quality of Instruction by Subject Area

Parents were asked to rate how well their child's school is helping their child learn various subjects. Core subjects included reading, writing, mathematics, social studies, and science. Elective areas included visual arts, performing arts, and computer/technology. Findings included the following:

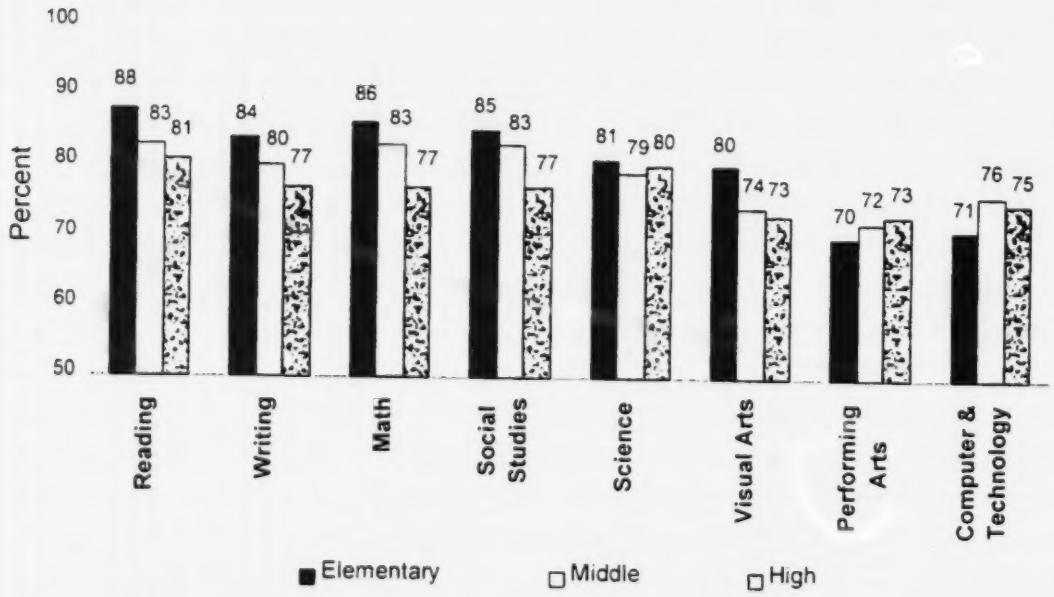
- Core classes received consistently good or excellent responses from parents across all levels, though elementary level parents tallied the highest percentages (80 to 88%) that rated the core classes as good or excellent. At the middle school level, the positive responses ranged from 72 to 83 percent, and at the high school level, the percentages ranged from 73 to 81 for core subjects.

- Of the core subjects, parents gave the highest responses in the category of reading, with 86% of all parents selecting good or excellent.

- Parent satisfaction with elective areas was somewhat lower than for core areas. The elective area of performing arts received the lowest percentage of good or excellent responses at 71% across all three levels.

Figure 3 summarizes the percent of good or excellent responses for each school level and subject.

Figure 3: Percent of Positive Responses (Good to Excellent) by Subject and School Level



Beginning with the core subjects and ending with the elective areas, Figures 4 through 11 detail the parent responses at each level, the overall percentage for WCPSS, and—when available—the overall results from the 1998-1999 parent survey.

The highest percentage of good or excellent responses was in the subject of reading. At the elementary level, 85% of parent respondents chose "excellent" or "good." 83% of the middle school parents and 81% of the high school parents rated their school as good or excellent. While the percentage of parent respondents that rated their school as excellent in helping their child learn reading skills was approximately 6 points higher than in 1999, the shift occurred from good to excellent, with no change in the percentage of parents choosing "poor" or "fair."

Figure 4: Response to Survey Item:
How would you rate this school in helping your child learn reading skills.

2000-2001 Results	N	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Elementary	4475	1.85	9.77	43.46	44.92
Middle	1944	3.14	13.73	53.70	29.42
High	1516	3.56	15.17	55.41	25.86
Overall for 2001	7935	2.49	11.77	48.25	37.48
1999	42474	2.12	12.72	53.49	31.67

Parent respondents rating their school as good or excellent in helping their child learn writing skills went down one point in 2000-2001, but the overall percentage choosing excellent increased four points. The percentage choosing excellent was much higher for elementary schools (39%) than middle (29%) or high (25%) schools.

Figure 5: Response to Survey Item:
How would you rate this school in helping your child learn writing skills.

2000-2001 Results	N	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Elementary	4469	2.75	13.07	45.58	38.60
Middle	1940	3.66	15.98	51.80	28.56
High	1520	4.14	18.36	52.04	25.46
Overall for 2001	7929	3.24	14.80	48.34	33.62
1999	42465	2.47	15.00	53.22	29.31

Comparing responses from 1999 to 2001, both parent surveys reported 84% good or excellent responses in helping children learn mathematics skills, with more parents choosing excellent in 2001 than in 1999.

Figure 6: Response to Survey Item:
How would you rate this school in helping your child learn mathematics skills.

2000-2001 Results	N	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Elementary	4472	2.48	11.23	47.12	39.18
Middle	1940	3.97	13.51	48.35	34.18
High	1514	5.88	17.31	46.83	29.99
Overall for 2001	7926	3.49	12.95	47.37	36.20
1999	42302	2.57	13.22	52.68	31.53

Good or excellent responses from parents who rated their child's school in helping their child learn social studies skills ranged from 78 to 85%, with the lowest percentage being from high school parent respondents, and the highest being from elementary level respondents. The highest percentage of excellent responses came from middle school parents (32%).

Figure 7: Response to Survey Item:
How would you rate this school in helping your child learn social studies skills.

2000-2001 Results	N	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Elementary	4451	2.09	12.99	54.53	30.40
Middle	1943	3.09	13.84	51.16	31.91
High	1511	5.03	17.34	54.86	22.77
Overall for 2001	7905	2.90	14.03	53.76	29.31
1999	41585	2.22	15.43	57.04	25.30

Good or excellent responses from parent survey respondents were most consistent across school levels in the subject of science. Elementary level parents rated their schools highest (81%), then high school respondents (80%) and middle school respondents just 1% lower (79%).
Comparing responses from 1999 to 2001, both surveys reported 80% good or excellent responses in helping children learn science skills, with excellent responses a few points higher in 2001.

Figure 8: Response to Survey Item:
How would you rate this school in helping your child learn science skills.

2000-2001 Results	N	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Elementary	4448	2.86	16.14	50.49	30.51
Middle	1942	4.33	16.27	50.82	28.58
High	1515	4.62	15.31	54.13	25.94
Overall for 2001	7905	3.56	16.01	51.27	29.16
1999	41572	2.77	17.29	54.92	25.03

Three "elective" areas – visual arts, performing arts, computer and technology– showed a lower percentage of good or excellent responses than the "academic" subjects discussed above.

In the area of visual arts, elementary school parent respondents had the highest percentage of good or excellent responses (80%), and positive responses were lower at the middle and high school levels (74% and 73% respectively).

Figure 9: Response to Survey Item:
How would you rate this school in helping your child learn visual arts skills.

2000-2001 Results	N	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Elementary	4406	3.11	16.55	50.91	29.44
Middle	1826	5.20	20.70	53.01	21.08
High	1401	5.50	21.98	53.03	19.49
Overall for 2001	7633	4.05	18.54	51.80	25.61

Parent responses were the least positive in rating the school in helping their child learn performing arts skills. Good/excellent responses were 70%, 72%, and 73% for elementary, middle, and high school level parent respondents respectively.

Figure 10: Response to Survey Item:
How would you rate this school in helping your child learn performing arts skills.

2000-2001 Results	N	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Elementary	4379	7.70	21.83	45.28	25.19
Middle	1832	6.71	21.18	47.93	24.18
High	1400	6.64	20.29	49.14	23.93
Overall for 2001	7611	7.27	21.39	46.63	24.72

Another area where parent respondents answered less positively was in rating their school in helping their child learn computer and technology skills. Good or excellent responses were 71%, 76%, and 75% for elementary, middle, and high school parent respondents respectively.

Figure 11: Response to Survey Item:
How would you rate this school in helping your child learn computer and technology skills.

2000-2001 Results	N	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Elementary	4450	6.52	22.49	46.49	24.49
Middle	1904	5.62	18.01	49.53	26.84
High	1467	4.91	19.97	52.76	22.36
Overall for 2001	7821	6.00	20.93	48.41	24.66

Parent Responses Compared to Student Responses

Questions asking for a rating of the school in helping students learn skills in the core subjects and computer and technology skills were asked on both the parent survey and the student survey. Figures 12 through 17 detail the responses of both students and parents at the elementary, middle and high school levels. Graphs comparing the good or excellent responses at each school level are also provided.

Generally speaking, parent respondents at the elementary school level were slightly more critical than students. However, at the high school level parent respondents were more positive than students. At the middle school level, parent respondents were more positive for reading, social studies and science while more critical of writing, mathematics, and computer and technology.

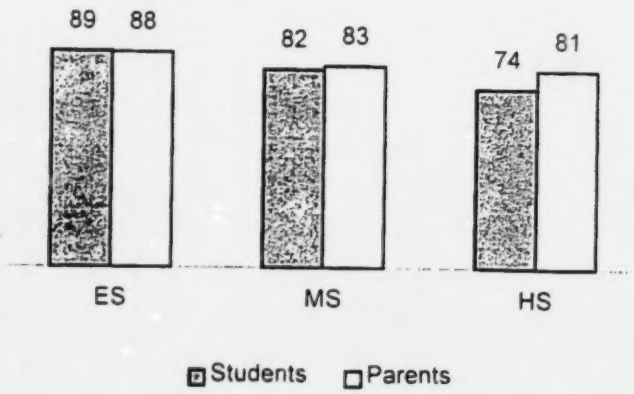
Reading

Elementary and middle school student and parent respondents were very similar in their ratings of the teaching of reading skills. The most significant disparity between students and parents occurred at the high school level where students were more critical of their school in helping them learn reading.

Figure 12: Combined Response to Survey Item:
Rate this school in helping students learn reading skills

	Student Respondents				Parent Respondents		
	ES	MS	HS		ES	MS	HS
Poor	2.27	4.41	4.48		1.85	3.14	3.56
Fair	8.96	14.33	21.33		9.77	13.73	15.17
Good	40.49	48.01	51.23		43.46	53.70	55.41
Excellent	48.29	33.55	22.60		44.92	29.42	25.86
# in Group	6474	3064	2602		4475	1944	1516

Figure 13: Percentage of Respondents Rating their School Good or Excellent in Helping Students Learn Reading Skills



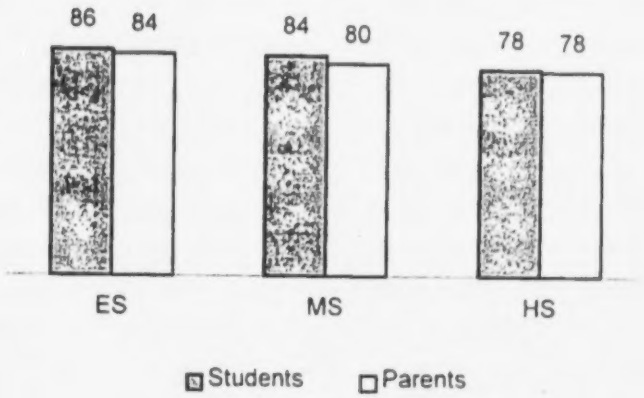
Writing

In the area of schools helping students learn writing skills, parent respondents were slightly more critical than student respondents except at the high school level where an equal percentage (78%) responded good or excellent. Nearly one quarter of both student and parent respondents rated their school poor or fair in helping students learn writing skills. Once again, more positive responses were received at the elementary level than at the middle school and high school levels.

Figure 14: Response to Survey Item:
Rate this school in helping students learn writing skills

	Student Respondents				Parent Respondents		
	ES	MS	HS		ES	MS	HS
Poor	2.63	3.85	4.27		2.75	3.66	4.14
Fair	11.66	12.60	17.47		13.07	15.98	18.36
Good	33.96	41.38	49.35		45.58	51.80	52.04
Excellent	51.75	42.17	28.91		38.60	28.56	25.46
# in Group	6466	3064	2598		4469	1940	1520

Figure 15: Percentage of Respondents Rating their School Good or Excellent in Helping Students Learn Writing Skills



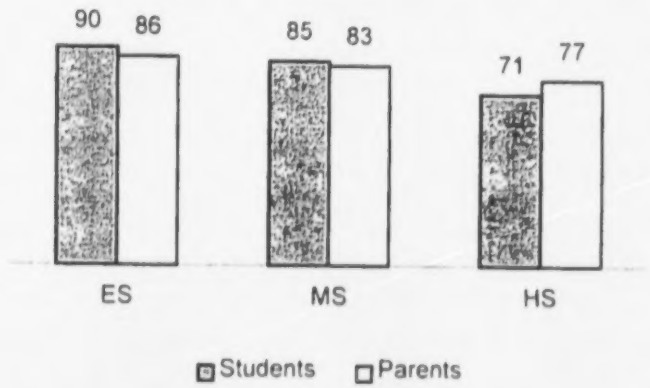
Mathematics

On the subject of mathematics student respondents are more positive at the elementary level. and parent respondents more positive at the high school level. Respondents – both students and parents – were notably more positive at the elementary school level (90% and 86% respectively) compared to respondents at the high school level (71% and 77% respectively). More student respondents at the high school level - 29% - rated their school as poor or fair in helping students learn mathematics.

Figure 16: Response to Survey Item:
Rate this school in helping students learn mathematics skills

	Student Respondents				Parent Respondents		
	ES	MS	HS		ES	MS	HS
Poor	2.55	3.80	7.87		2.48	3.97	5.88
Fair	7.29	11.58	21.18		11.23	13.51	17.31
Good	22.89	31.97	42.75		47.12	48.35	46.83
Excellent	67.27	52.65	28.20		39.18	34.18	29.99
# in Group	6471	3056	2578		4472	1940	1514

Figure 17: Percentage of Respondents Rating their School Good or Excellent in Helping Students Learn Mathematics Skills



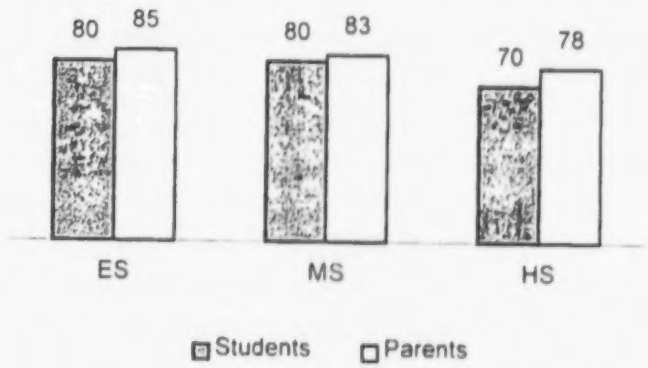
Social Studies

Social studies was the one subject where more parent respondents rated their school good or excellent at all school levels than student respondents. At the middle school level, the difference was only 3%, however there was a 5% difference at the elementary level, and 8% at the high school level.

Figure 18: Response to Survey Item:
Rate this school in helping students learn social studies skills

	Student Respondents				Parent Respondents		
	ES	MS	HS		ES	MS	HS
Poor	4.13	6.27	7.39		2.09	3.09	5.03
Fair	15.71	13.30	22.64		12.99	13.84	17.34
Good	37.34	37.13	46.25		54.53	51.16	54.86
Excellent	42.82	43.30	23.72		30.40	31.91	22.77
# in Group	6422	3046	2584		4451	1943	1511

Figure 19: Percentage of Respondents Rating their School Good or Excellent in Helping Students Learn Social Studies Skills



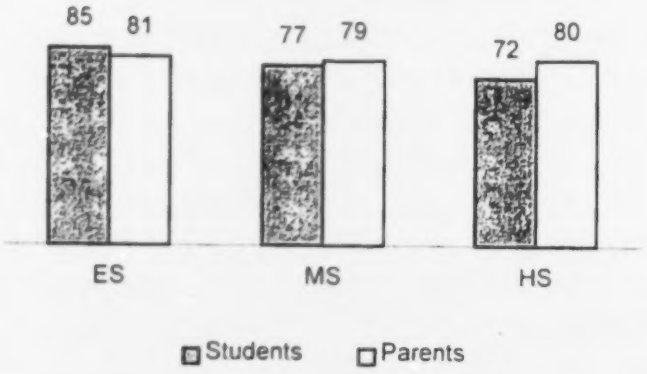
Science

On the question of science instruction, there was little variance (3%) between elementary, middle and high school parent respondents (81%, 79%, and 80% respectively). However, a much wider variance (13%) occurred between student respondents (85%, 77%, 72%) in the percentage choosing good or excellent.

Figure 20: Response to Survey Item:
Rate this school in helping students learn science skills

	Student Respondents				Parent Respondents		
	ES	MS	HS		ES	MS	HS
Poor	3.73	7.67	6.89		2.86	4.33	4.62
Fair	11.44	14.91	21.04		16.14	16.27	15.31
Good	31.85	37.12	46.03		50.49	50.82	54.13
Excellent	52.96	40.3	26.03		30.51	28.58	25.94
# in Group	6418	3052	2585		4448	1942	1515

Figure 21: Percentage of Respondents Rating their School Good or Excellent in Helping Students Learn Science Skills



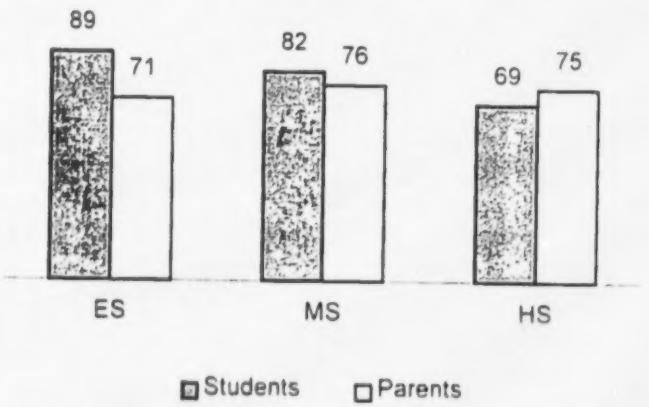
Computer and Technology

Computer and technology skills received more poor or fair responses—from both students and parents—and at elementary, middle and high school levels—than any other subject. Parents were more consistent in their positive (good or excellent) responses across school levels (71 – 76%) whereas student responses differed more at the various levels: elementary 89%, middle 82% and high only 69%. Student responses were highest at the elementary school level, and parent responses were highest at the middle/high school level.

Figure 22: Response to Survey Item:
Rate this school in helping students learn computer and technology skills

	Student Respondents			Parent Respondents		
	ES	MS	HS	ES	MS	HS
Poor	9.77	9.35	7.49	6.52	5.62	1.91
Fair	17.23	19.65	23.41	22.49	18.01	19.97
Good	29.99	36.19	43.01	46.49	49.53	52.76
Excellent	43.01	34.81	26.09	24.49	26.84	22.36
# in Group	6449	3048	2576	4450	1904	1467

Figure 23: Percentage of Respondents Rating their School Good or Excellent in Helping Students Learn Computer and Technology Skills



PARENT INVOLVEMENT AND COMMUNICATION

Elementary school parent respondents were very positive (92% agreed or strongly agreed) in their response to a statement about whether they received courteous attention when they called the school. Fewer (82%) middle school parent respondents agreed or strongly agreed on this issue, and only 69% of high school respondents felt they received courteous attention. The percentage of uncertain responses rises from elementary to middle to high school. This may reflect a pattern of less contact with schools as students get older. Very little change in elementary and middle school results have been seen on the past three parent surveys regarding this question. However, high school agreement dropped several points in the latest survey.

Figure 24: Response to Survey Item:
If I call the school, I receive courteous attention.

		Answer Options					Combined Options		
2000-2001 Results	N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree	DS/D	Uncertain	SA/A
Elementary	4454	1.08	2.72	4.51	44.21	47.49	3.80	4.51	91.70
Middle	1941	2.37	7.99	7.62	51.06	30.96	10.36	7.62	82.02
High	1520	5.20	12.57	13.36	49.87	19.01	17.77	13.36	68.88
Overall	7915	2.19	5.90	6.97	46.98	37.97	8.09	6.97	84.94
				1999			6.83	6.84	86.41

2000-2001 Results					1999	1997
	N	DS/D	Uncertain	SA/A	SA/A	SA/A
Elementary	4454	3.80	4.51	91.70	92.40	91.20
Middle	1941	10.36	7.62	82.02	83.20	83.30
High	1520	17.77	13.36	68.88	73.30	71.20

While parent respondents are relatively positive about receiving courteous attention from their school, they are considerably less positive about counting on their school for support when they have concerns about their child. Only 55% of high school parent respondents and 70% of middle school respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they could count on their school for support. Even at the elementary school level, only 84% agreed that they can count on the support of their school. Again, there is a much higher percentage of uncertain responses than disagreement.

Figure 25: Response to Survey Item:
When I have concerns about my child, I can count on the school for support.

		Answer Options					Combined Options		
2000-2001 Results	N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree	DS/D	Uncertain	SA/A
Elementary	4450	1.30	3.64	11.33	49.35	34.38	4.94	11.33	83.73
Middle	1942	2.94	6.59	20.91	49.33	20.24	9.53	20.91	69.57
High	1518	5.53	11.40	27.80	42.62	12.65	16.93	27.80	55.27
Overall	7910	2.51	5.85	16.84	48.05	26.74	8.37	16.84	74.79
				1999			8.28	17.90	73.71

On the subject of parents receiving enough communication from the school to keep them informed of its activities, once again, elementary school respondents were more positive (92% agreed or strongly agreed) than middle school or high school respondents (74% and 66% respectively). Again, there is very little change from 1999 to 2001, dropping from 84% to 83%.

Figure 26: Response to Survey Item:
I receive enough communication from the school to keep me informed of its activities.

		Answer Options					Combined Options		
2000-2001 Results	N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree	DS/D	Uncertain	SA/A
Elementary	4487	0.96	3.34	3.92	50.03	41.74	4.30	3.92	91.77
Middle	1952	3.89	10.66	11.32	52.56	21.57	14.55	11.32	74.13
High	1530	5.42	17.12	11.44	49.61	16.41	22.54	11.44	66.02
Overall	7969	2.53	7.78	7.18	50.57	31.94	10.31	7.18	82.51
				1999			9.33	6.37	84.25

HOMEWORK

The vast majority of parent respondents at all school levels agreed or strongly agreed that their child does some homework almost every school night. This ranged from 85% of high school parent respondents to 97% of elementary school respondents.

Figure 27: Response to Survey Item:
My child does some homework almost every school night.

		Answer Options					Combined Options		
2000-2001 Results	N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree	DS/D	Uncertain	SA/A
Elementary	4467	0.31	1.86	1.25	36.47	60.11	2.17	1.25	96.58
Middle	1948	1.18	5.65	3.54	45.02	44.61	6.83	3.54	89.63
High	1524	2.89	7.55	4.59	48.16	36.81	10.44	4.59	84.97
Overall	7939	1.02	3.88	2.45	40.81	51.83	4.90	2.45	92.65

Over one third of elementary school parents reported that they help their child with homework five hours or more during each week. Another one third spend 3-4 hours helping their child with homework. Only 5% of elementary school parent respondents reported spending less than an hour per week helping their child with homework.

Figure 28: Response to Survey Item:
On average, how much time do you spend each week helping your child with homework, discussing school work with your child, or reading with your child?

2000-2001 Results	N	Less than an hour	1-2 hours	3-4 hours	5 hours or more
Elementary Level Only	4375	5%	28%	32%	35%

BEHAVIOR AND DISCIPLINE

Almost one-half of middle and high school respondents did not agree that students in their child's school were well behaved, while 76% of elementary school parent respondents felt that students in their child's school were well behaved. Overall, the percentage of parent respondents who agreed or strongly agreed with this issue went down 3 points from the 1999 parent survey (from 69% to 66%).

Figure 29: Response to Survey Item:
Students in my child's school are well behaved overall.

		Answer Options					Combined Options		
2000-2001 Results	N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree	DS/D	Uncertain	SA/A
Elementary	4469	1.28	5.93	17.30	56.23	19.27	7.21	17.30	75.50
Middle	1935	4.29	11.73	30.08	46.15	7.75	16.02	30.08	53.90
High	1517	4.55	11.73	32.43	44.30	6.99	16.28	32.43	51.29
Overall	7921	2.64	8.46	23.32	51.48	14.10	11.10	23.32	65.59
				1999			9.26	21.97	68.74

2000-2001 Results					1999	1997	1995
	N	DS/D	Uncertain	SA/A	SA/A	SA/A	SA/A
Elementary	4469	7.21	17.30	75.50	79.30	76.70	70.60
Middle	1935	16.02	30.08	53.90	56.60	54.60	47.90
High	1517	16.28	32.43	51.29	54.40	47.60	37.40

More elementary school respondents felt the rules of their school were fair than at other levels. 90% of the elementary parents agreed or strongly agreed, but only 80% of middle school and 68% of high school parent respondents were as positive. Further, this is another area showing a slight decline in parent confidence since the 1999 survey, going from 85% overall in 1999 to 83% overall in 2001.

Figure 30: Response to Survey Item:
The rules of this school are fair.

		Answer Options					Combined Options		
2000-2001 Results	N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree	DS/D	Uncertain	SA/A
Elementary	4461	0.94	2.49	6.23	57.14	33.20	3.43	6.23	90.34
Middle	1938	2.32	5.78	12.33	58.67	20.90	8.10	12.33	79.57
High	1526	4.52	10.16	17.43	55.83	12.06	14.68	17.43	67.89
Overall	7925	1.97	4.77	9.88	57.26	26.12	6.74	9.88	83.38
				1999			5.57	9.09	85.30

There is a 25 point disparity between high school parent respondents who believe that teachers at their school care about the students (65%) to middle school level (77%) to elementary school level (89%). Only 13% of the high school parent respondents disagreed with the statement, while 22% were uncertain. This may again reflect a lack of connection between high schools and parents.

Figure 31: Response to Survey Item:
Teachers in this school really seem to care about the students.

		Answer Options					Combined Options		
2000-2001 Results	N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree	DS/D	Uncertain	SA/A
Elementary	4468	0.90	2.24	7.81	47.29	41.76	3.14	7.81	89.05
Middle	1948	2.62	5.60	15.14	52.62	24.02	8.22	15.14	76.64
High	1519	2.76	10.20	21.66	49.11	16.26	12.96	21.66	65.37
Overall	7935	1.68	4.59	12.26	48.95	32.52	6.27	12.26	81.47

Whether or not schools handle discipline fairly is another subject where more elementary school parent respondents were positive in their responses (agreed or strongly agreed) than middle or high school respondents.

Figure 32: Response to Survey Item:
Discipline of my child has been handled fairly at this school.

		Answer Options					Combined Options		
2000-2001 Results	N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree	DS/D	Uncertain	SA/A
Elementary	4408	0.77	2.84	7.40	53.68	35.32	3.61	7.40	89.00
Middle	1898	2.27	5.95	14.38	55.85	21.55	8.22	14.38	77.40
High	1490	4.83	7.58	18.79	52.89	15.91	12.41	18.79	68.80
Overall	7796	1.91	4.50	11.28	54.06	28.26	6.41	11.28	82.32
				1999			6.08	15.53	78.42

SAFETY

Questions concerning safety were added to the 2000-2001 parent survey (as well as the student and staff surveys). Generally, school safety received high marks from parent respondents this year.

School is a Safe Place

As shown in Figure 33 below, 87% of the 7,962 parent respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their school was a safe place to learn. There were significantly more elementary school respondents that agreed or strongly agreed (93% of 4,487 parents) than any other level. That is 12 points higher than middle school respondents (81% of 1,947 parents) and 17% higher than high school respondents (76% of 1,528 parents). More high school respondents were uncertain than at any other school level. Response to this item showed no change from 1999.

Figure 33: Response to Survey Item:
My child's school is a safe place to learn.

		Answer Options					Combined Options		
2000-2001 Results	N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree	DS/D	Uncertain	SA/A
Elementary	4487	0.51	1.45	5.28	49.05	43.70	1.96	5.28	92.75
Middle	1947	1.08	4.37	13.20	60.09	21.26	5.45	13.20	81.35
High	1528	1.83	4.78	17.21	60.08	16.10	6.61	17.21	76.18
Overall	7962	0.90	2.80	9.51	53.87	32.92	3.71	9.51	86.78
				1999			3.66	9.66	86.66

Figure 34 compares the parent responses to the student and staff responses to the same issue.

Figure 34: All Level Response to Survey Item:
School is a safe place.

	Student Respondents N = 12,187				Parent Respondents N = 7,962				Staff Respondents N = 5,738		
	ES	MS	HS		ES	MS	HS		ES	MS	HS
Disagree	2.86	7.49	7.69		1.96	5.45	6.61		3.06	4.97	1.93
Undecided	11.96	24.79	22.96		5.28	13.20	17.21		4.66	10.24	7.95
Agree	85.18	67.72	69.35		92.75	81.35	76.18		92.29	84.79	90.11
# in Group	6504	3070	2613		4487	1947	1528		2943	1348	1447

Findings shown in Figure 34 include the following:

- 93% of elementary parent survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed that school was a safe place; high school parents were the lowest at only 76%, 16 points less than elementary school parents. Middle school parents tallied 81%.

- 85% of the elementary student survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed that school was a safe place; both middle school and high school students tallied lower – 68% and 69% respectively – more than 17 points lower than elementary students.

- A lower percentage (overall 77%) of student respondents at all levels felt their school was a safe place. Staff respondents had the most confidence on the issue (overall 90%), and parent respondents that agreed or strongly agreed that school was a safe place tallied 87%.

- Middle school respondents were the most consistent in their response: 85% of students, 93% of parents and 92% of staff felt their school was safe.

The WAVELINE: "Save A Friend"

The WAVELINE: "Save a Friend" program was put into place by Governor Hunt in February of 2000. The WAVELINE telephone hotline is available for students, parents and community members to anonymously call in concerns that they may have about friends and/or acquaintances involved in violence and/or substance abuse activities. As this program is new, and the promotion and distribution of information is still in its infancy, two questions were put on all surveys (parents, students and staff) to establish a baseline for tracking public awareness.

Most parent respondents agreed or strongly agreed that a Tipline is a good idea. However, while few parents disagreed or strongly disagreed, 17% overall had no opinion on the subject. Approximately 200 fewer parents responded to the two questions about the Tipline, compared to other topical questions.

Figure 35: Response to Survey Item:
Is having an anonymous telephone hotline for keeping schools and students safe is a good idea?

2000-2001 Results	N	Yes	No	No Opinion
Elementary	4363	74.56	6.37	19.07
Middle	1902	79.07	5.73	15.19
High	1504	77.86	7.38	14.76
Overall	7769	76.30	6.41	17.29

Figure 36 below compares the student, parent and staff responses to the query of whether an anonymous telephone hotline is a good idea.

Figure 36: Comparison of Student, Parent and Staff Responses to Survey Item: Is having an anonymous telephone hotline for keeping schools and students safe is a good idea?

	Student Respondents N = 12,187				Parent Respondents N = 7,769				Staff Respondents N = 5,689		
	ES	MS	HS		ES	MS	HS		ES	MS	HS
No	14.43	13.37	15.30		6.37	5.73	7.38		2.85	2.31	1.75
No Opinion/ Uncertain	24.44	41.65	35.95		19.07	15.19	14.76		24.42	16.85	15.78
Yes	61.12	44.98	48.75		74.56	79.07	77.86		72.74	80.84	82.47
# in Group	6526	3066	2595		4363	1902	1504		2916	1341	1432

Findings shown in Figure 36 include the following:

- One of the more noticeable differences when comparing responses from students, parents and staff was the low percentage of students that felt an anonymous telephone hotline was a good idea. Less than half of the middle and high school student respondents indicated it was a good idea, and only 61% of elementary school respondents agreed. This is lower than parent and staff respondents.

- While not very high percentages, parents were consistent across school levels with 75, 79, and 78% of elementary, middle and high school parents agreeing the hotline is a good idea.

- Staff respondents gave the highest percentage of positive responses to this issue, with 73% of elementary staff respondents that agreed with the idea.

Figure 37 shows that most parent respondents—at all levels—are not aware of the WAVELINE "Save a Friend" Tipline. Only 20% of the middle school parent respondents, and 17% of the elementary and high school respondents indicated an awareness of the Tipline initiative.

Figure 37: Response to Survey Item: Are you aware of the WAVE Safe Schools (Save A Friend) Tipline?

2000-2001 Results	N	Yes	No
Elementary	4378	17.31	82.69
Middle	1910	19.95	80.05
High	1502	17.38	82.62
Overall	7790	17.97	82.03

When comparing responses from students, parents, and staff, the trend at all levels is that students knew less about the Tipline than parents, and parents knew less than staff. At all levels, a higher percentage of school staff respondents were aware of this Tipline. It is also interesting to note that more middle school respondents – students, parents, and staff – knew about the Tipline than high school respondents, and that elementary school respondents indicated the lowest level of awareness.

Figure 38: Comparison of Student, Parent and Staff Responses to Survey Item: Are you aware of the WAVE Safe Schools (Save A Friend) Tipline?

	Student Respondents N = 12,207			Parent Respondents N = 7,790			Staff Respondents N = 5,654		
	ES	MS	HS	ES	MS	HS	ES	MS	HS
No	88.54	83.65	86.24	82.69	80.05	82.62	38.06	29.85	28.26
Uncertain*							39.92	30.90	34.01
Yes	11.46	16.35	13.76	17.31	19.95	17.38	22.01	39.24	34.01
# in Group	6547	3058	2602	4378	1910	1502	2898	1330	1426

*Uncertain was an option only on the Staff Surveys.

The question regarding school buildings and grounds was changed for the 2001 survey to specify whether they were **environmentally** safe for students and staff. Following the trend within this parent survey report, the highest percentage of respondents that agreed or strongly agreed were from the elementary school level (80%). 74% of middle and 65% of high school respondents agreed or strongly agreed to this issue. Over 15% of high school parent respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that the buildings and grounds were environmentally safe for students and staff, and almost 20% were uncertain. Uncertainty was higher than disagreement at all levels.

Figure 39: Response to Survey Item: The buildings and grounds at my child's school are environmentally safe for students and staff.

		Answer Options					Combined Options		
2000-2001 Results	N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree	SD/D	Uncertain	SA/A
Elementary	4478	1.99	4.31	13.64	49.49	30.57	6.30	13.64	80.06
Middle	1946	2.83	4.98	18.09	51.59	22.51	7.81	18.09	74.10
High	1527	5.83	9.50	19.91	48.53	16.24	15.33	19.91	64.77
Overall	7951	2.93	5.47	15.93	49.82	25.85	8.40	15.93	75.66

RESULTS SUMMARY

Although parent views were mostly positive, responses highlighted some areas for attention such as helping students learn computer and technology skills, interfacing between parents and school staff, and student behavior.

NEED MORE INFORMATION?

Complete results for individual schools and the appropriate school level have been provided to each school principal and can be obtained from the Department of Evaluation and Research. If you have questions about the parent survey, call Wanda Wildman at (919) 850-1878 or send email to wwildman@wcpss.net.

Attachment 1(a)

PARENT SURVEY - ELEMENTARY

USE PENCIL ONLY

Please use a pencil to darken the bubble beside your child's school name.

- ○ Adams
- ○ Apex
- ○ Aversboro
- ○ Baileywick
- ○ Baucom
- ○ Brassfield
- ○ Brentwood
- ○ Briarcliff
- ○ Brooks
- ○ Bugg
- ○ Carver
- ○ Cary
- ○ Combs
- ○ Conn
- ○ Creech Rd.
- ○ Davis Drive
- ○ Dillard Drive
- ○ Douglas
- ○ Durant Rd.
- ○ Farmington Woods
- ○ Fox Road
- ○ Fuller
- ○ Fuquay-Varina
- ○ Green
- ○ Green Hope
- ○ Hilburn
- ○ Holly Springs
- ○ Hodge Road
- ○ Hunter
- ○ Jeffreys Grove
- ○ Jones Dairy
- ○ Joyner
- ○ Kingswood
- ○ Knightdale
- ○ Lacy
- ○ Leesville Rd
- ○ Lead Mine
- ○ Lincoln Heights
- ○ Lockhart
- ○ Lynn Road
- ○ Middle Creek
- ○ Millbrook
- ○ Morrisville
- ○ North Ridge
- ○ Northwoods
- ○ Oak Grove
- ○ Olds
- ○ Olive Chapel
- ○ Partnership
- ○ Penny Road
- ○ Pleasant Union
- ○ Poe
- ○ Powell
- ○ Rand Road
- ○ Reedy Creek
- ○ Rolesville
- ○ Root
- ○ Salem
- ○ Smith
- ○ Stough
- ○ Swift Creek
- ○ Timber Drive
- ○ Underwood
- ○ Vance
- ○ Vandora Springs
- ○ Wake Forest
- ○ Wakefield
- ○ Washington
- ○ Weatherstone
- ○ Wendell
- ○ West Lake
- ○ Wilburn
- ○ Wildwood Forest
- ○ Wiley
- ○ Willow Springs
- ○ Yates Mill
- ○ York
- ○ Zebulon

Please use a pencil to darken the bubble indicating whether you strongly agree (SA) or agree (A) or are uncertain (U) or disagree (D) or strongly disagree (SD) with the following statements:

	SA	A	U	D	SD
1. My child's school is a safe place to learn.	○	○	○	○	○
2. My child's school provides a high quality educational program.	○	○	○	○	○
3. My child is given challenging work in all classes.	○	○	○	○	○
4. If I call the school, I receive courteous attention.	○	○	○	○	○
5. Students in my child's school are well behaved overall.	○	○	○	○	○
6. The rules of this school are fair.	○	○	○	○	○
7. Teachers in this school really seem to care about the students.	○	○	○	○	○
8. Discipline of my child has been handled fairly at this school.	○	○	○	○	○
9. My child does some homework almost every school night.	○	○	○	○	○
10. When I have concerns about my child, I can count on the school for support.	○	○	○	○	○
11. I receive enough communication from the school to keep me informed of its activities.	○	○	○	○	○
12. The buildings and grounds at my child's school are environmentally safe for students and staff.	○	○	○	○	○

13. Do you think having an anonymous telephone hotline for keeping schools and students safe is a good idea?

○ Yes ○ No ○ No Opinion

14. Are you aware of the WAVE Safe Schools (Save A Friend) Tipline?

○ Yes ○ No

15. How would you rate this school in helping your child learn:

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
reading skills	○	○	○	○
writing skills	○	○	○	○
mathematics skills	○	○	○	○
social studies skills	○	○	○	○
science skills	○	○	○	○
visual arts skills	○	○	○	○
performing arts skills	○	○	○	○
computer and technology skills	○	○	○	○

16. On average, how much time do you spend <u>each week</u> helping your child with homework, discussing school work with your child, or reading with your child?

○ Less than an hour ○ 1 - 2 hours ○ 3 - 4 hours ○ 5 hours or more

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Attachment 1(b)

PARENT SURVEY - MIDDLE SCHOOL

USE PENCIL ONLY

Please use a pencil to darken the bubble beside your child's school name.

- Apex
- Carnage
- Carroll
- Centennial Campus
- Daniels
- Davis Drive
- Dillard
- Durant Road
- East Cary
- East Garner
- East Millbrook
- East Wake
- Fuquay-Varina
- Leesville Road
- Ligon
- Lufkin Road
- Martin
- Mt. Vernon
- North Garner
- Wake Forest-Rolesville
- Wakefield
- West Cary
- West Lake
- West Millbrook
- Zebulon

Please use a pencil to darken the bubble indicating whether you strongly agree (SA) or agree (A) or are uncertain (U) or disagree (D) or strongly disagree (SD) with the following statements:

	SA	A	U	D	SD
1. My child's school is a safe place to learn.	○	○	○	○	○
2. My child's school provides a high quality educational program.	○	○	○	○	○
3. My child is given challenging work in all classes.	○	○	○	○	○
4. If I call the school, I receive courteous attention.	○	○	○	○	○
5. Students in my child's school are well behaved overall.	○	○	○	○	○
6. The rules of this school are fair.	○	○	○	○	○
7. Teachers in this school really seem to care about the students.	○	○	○	○	○
8. Discipline of my child has been handled fairly at this school.	○	○	○	○	○
9. My child does some homework almost every school night.	○	○	○	○	○
10. When I have concerns about my child, I can count on the school for support.	○	○	○	○	○
11. I receive enough communication from the school to keep me informed of its activities.	○	○	○	○	○
12. The buildings and grounds at my child's school are environmentally safe for students and staff.	○	○	○	○	○

13. Do you think having an anonymous telephone hotline for keeping schools and students safe is a good idea?

○ Yes ○ No ○ No Opinion

14. Are you aware of the WAVE Safe Schools (Save A Friend) Tipline?

○ Yes ○ No

15. How would you rate this school in helping your child learn:

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
reading skills	○	○	○	○
writing skills	○	○	○	○
mathematics skills	○	○	○	○
social studies skills	○	○	○	○
science skills	○	○	○	○
visual arts skills	○	○	○	○
performing arts skills	○	○	○	○
computer and technology skills	○	○	○	○

16. How often is your child involved in after school activities (sports, clubs, church, etc.)?

○ Most days ○ About once a week ○ Sometimes ○ Never

17. How often during the past year did you do the following things:

	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Occasionally	Not at all
Made sure your child attended school	○	○	○	○	○
Made sure reading material was available for your child	○	○	○	○	○
Made sure homework was completed	○	○	○	○	○
Discussed homework or read with your child	○	○	○	○	○

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Attachment 1(c)

PARENT SURVEY - HIGH SCHOOL

USE PENCIL ONLY

Please use a pencil to darken the bubble beside your child's school name.

- ○ Apex
- ○ Athens Drive
- ○ Broughton
- ○ Cary
- ○ East Wake
- ○ Enloe
- ○ Fuquay-Varina
- ○ Garner
- ○ Green Hope
- ○ Leesville
- ○ Longview
- ○ Millbrook
- ○ Phillips
- ○ Sanderson
- ○ Southeast Raleigh
- ○ Wakefield
- ○ Wake Forest-Rolesville

Please use a pencil to darken the bubble indicating whether you strongly agree (SA) or agree (A) or are uncertain (U) or disagree (D) or strongly disagree (SD) with the following statements:

	SA	A	U	D	SD
1. My child's school is a safe place to learn.	○	○	○	○	○
2. My child's school provides a high quality educational program.	○	○	○	○	○
3. My child is given challenging work in all classes.	○	○	○	○	○
4. If I call the school, I receive courteous attention.	○	○	○	○	○
5. Students in my child's school are well behaved overall.	○	○	○	○	○
6. The rules of this school are fair.	○	○	○	○	○
7. Teachers in this school really seem to care about the students.	○	○	○	○	○
8. Discipline of my child has been handled fairly at this school.	○	○	○	○	○
9. My child does some homework almost every school night.	○	○	○	○	○
10. When I have concerns about my child, I can count on the school for support.	○	○	○	○	○
11. I receive enough communication from the school to keep me informed of its activities.	○	○	○	○	○
12. The buildings and grounds at my child's school are environmentally safe for students and staff.	○	○	○	○	○
13. It is important to my child's future that he/she graduate from high school with at least a B average.	○	○	○	○	○

14. Do you think having an anonymous telephone hotline for keeping schools and students safe is a good idea?

○ Yes ○ No ○ No Opinion

15. Are you aware of the WAVE Safe Schools (Save A Friend) Tipline?

○ Yes ○ No

16. How would you rate this school in helping your child learn:

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
reading skills	○	○	○	○
writing skills	○	○	○	○
mathematics skills	○	○	○	○
social studies skills	○	○	○	○
science skills	○	○	○	○
visual arts skills	○	○	○	○
performing arts skills	○	○	○	○
computer and technology skills	○	○	○	○

17. How often is your child involved in after school activities (sports, clubs, church, etc.)?

○ Most days ○ About once a week ○ Sometimes ○ Never

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